



# NPDB-HIPDB



## DATA BANK NEWS



National Practitioner Data Bank—Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank

JULY 2006

### IQRS Improvements Arriving in November

Beginning November 13, 2006, the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS) will introduce several user-friendly enhancements for entities and their designated agents. These improvements are based on suggestions received from past IQRS User Review Panel (URP) meetings.

#### CONSOLIDATED IQRS QUERY SCREENS IMPROVE WORKFLOW

IQRS workflow enhancements will reduce the number of screen clicks necessary for a user to submit a query. Another improvement moves the **Administrator Options** and **View Data Bank Correspondence** functions to a single **Options** screen for easier access (see Figure 1 on page 2).

#### OCCUPATION/FIELD OF LICENSURE CODES REORGANIZED

A popular suggestion from recent URP meetings was to reorganize and prioritize the drop-down Occupation/Field of Licensure codes and the specialty codes on the query and report forms. Easier access to the most frequently used codes make completing queries and reports easier. The three most frequently used Field of Licensure groups will appear at the top of the Occupation/Field of Licensure codes drop-down list. These codes are: Physicians, Nurses/Advance Practice Registered Nurses, and Dental Service Providers. **Note:** Specialty codes are listed in alphabetical order by description rather than numerically. This feature allows the user to find the specialty code more easily. Specialty codes are only available

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for physicians, medical residents, dentists, and dental residents.

See *IQRS Improvements Arriving in November* on page 2

### New Data Banks Web Site Address!

The Data Banks' Web site address is [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov). Please note this change and update your Internet bookmarks to reference the new [hrsa.gov](http://hrsa.gov) address. The [hrsa.gov](http://hrsa.gov) domain provides added assurance to users that they are using a secure Federal Government Web site while working with the Data Banks. 🏠

# Queriers: For Best Results Submit Complete and Accurate Query Data

When submitting a query or self-query to the National Practitioner Data Bank—Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB), be sure to provide accurate and complete identifying information about the subject of your query.

When you submit a query or self-query, the Data Banks use a set of matching criteria to compare subject identifying information in the query with existing Data Bank reports. The Data Banks compare data elements to ensure that they provide the correct information regarding a health care practitioner, provider, or supplier.

All query subject identifying information is important. To ensure an accurate response from your query or self-

query, the query should identify the subject's name(s) (including maiden and married names and nicknames, such as Trish for Patricia), date of birth, Social Security Number (SSN), license information for each license held (including license number and State of license), professional school name, city where the school is located, and year of professional school graduation.

**The Data Banks' ability to correctly match queries with report subjects and maintain subject confidentiality depends on the accuracy of the subject identifying information submitted in queries and self-queries.** Please do your part to ensure the Data Banks successfully match query subjects to reports on file.†

*IQRS Improvements Arriving in November  
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## IQRS DOCUMENTS WILL REMAIN AVAILABLE LONGER

Beginning in November, the Report Verification Documents (RVDs) and query responses will remain available on the IQRS and through the Querying and Reporting XML Service (QRXS) and the Interface Control Document (ICD) Transfer Program (ITP) response files for 45 days, instead of the current 30 days. This increase in access time of the IQRS output documents is in response to users' requests. Charge receipts will remain available for 60 days via the **View Billing History** button on the **Options** screen.†

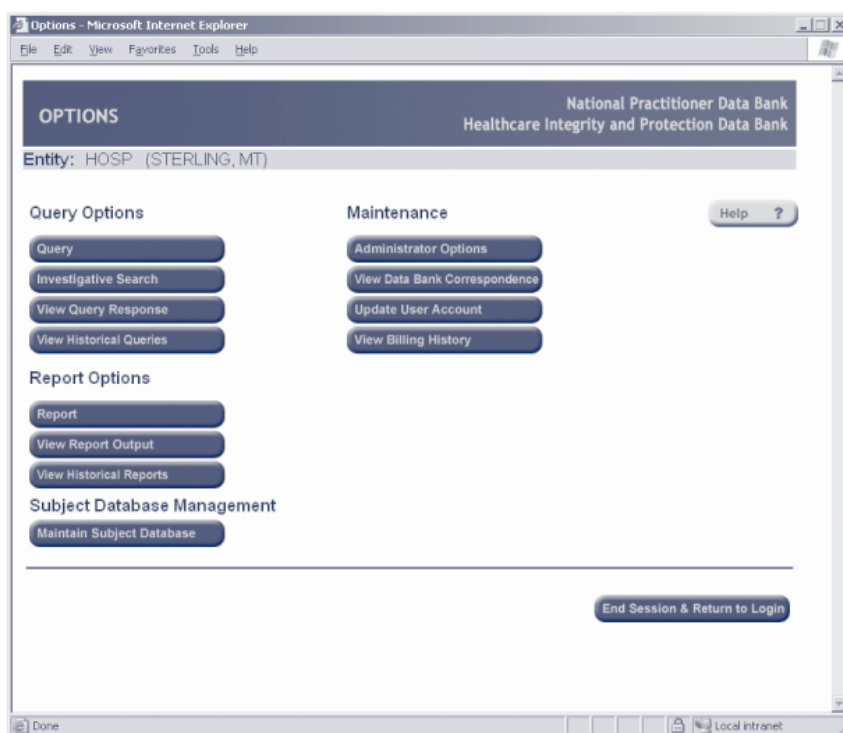


Figure 1. The newly organized Options screen enables users to easily access all query, report, subject database management, and maintenance functions.

## Past and Upcoming Data Bank Outreach Activities

Outreach and education of Data Bank users continues with representatives from the Practitioner Data Banks Branch (PDBB) participating in several outreach activities. These events provide an opportunity for the Data Banks to share information and learn from other health care community experts.

### MAY 2006

#### *Arizona Licensing Board Policy Forum*

On May 25th, PDBB held a Policy Forum for the Arizona licensing boards. The forum attendees discussed the importance of timely reporting, the Proactive Disclosure Service (PDS), and other policies that impact licensing boards.

#### *AHIP's Quality and Industry Standards Workgroup*

On May 25th, a Data Bank representative spoke with America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) Quality and Industry Standards Workgroup via the telephone about the PDS and Section 1921 of the *Social Security Act*.

### JUNE 2006

#### *Oklahoma/Kansas AMSS*

On June 8th, a Data Bank representative provided a presentation on the Data Banks to the Oklahoma/Kansas Association Medical Staff Services (AMSS). The presentation included breakout activities aimed at increasing the quality of reports submitted to the Data Banks.

#### *AHLA*

A Data Bank representative was co-presenter at the American Health Lawyers Association (AHLA) 2006 Annual Meeting on June 28th in Philadelphia, PA. The name of the presentation was *The National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) 15 Years Later* and the name of the co-presenter's presentation was *Health Care Quality Improvement Act (HCQIA) Case Law Development*.

### JULY 2006

#### *NCQA*

A Data Bank representative will serve as faculty for a National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) corporate credentialing workshop

on July 13th, in St. Louis, MO. The Data Bank representative will cover the basics of the NPDB and the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB).

### AUGUST 2006

#### *NCSBN*

On August 1st, a Data Bank representative will attend the 2006 National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, UT to present information on the Data Banks and new initiatives. The meeting entitled *"The Threshold of Regulatory Excellence - Taking up the Challenge..."* continues the important and demanding work of protecting the public."

#### *NASHO Leadership Summit*

On August 1st through 2nd, PDBB will provide information about the Data Banks at the Fourth Annual National Association of Speciality Health Organizations (NASHO) Leadership Summit, in La Jolla, CA. This summit is the largest specialty

*See Past and Upcoming Data Bank Outreach Activities on page 6*

## Section 1921 Public Comments Under Review

The Public Comment period for Section 1921 ended on May 22, 2006. If it is adopted, the proposed rule for Section 1921 of the *Social Security Act*, published on March 21, 2006, will affect the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) in the following manner:

- Adverse action reports, which are not restricted to issues related to professional competence and conduct, will be added to the NPDB on all licensed practitioners (not just physicians and dentists).

- Adverse action reports relative to certain negative actions or findings (mainly those taken by private accrediting organizations) will be added to the NPDB.

Section 1921 will allow hospitals access to adverse action reports on all licensed health care practitioners, not just physicians and dentists.

Please continue to check the *NPDB-HIPDB Data Bank News* for further information on the status of Section 1921. ¶

# The Data Bank Protects Sensitive Information

The Data Banks protect sensitive data through 1) strict adherence to regulations and 2) applying security guidance. Doing so establishes specific security controls for the National Practitioner Data Bank—Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB). The NPDB-HIPDB's mission, to provide accurate and timely information to further the quality of care, is safeguarded by these efforts. The keys to securing the Data Banks' sensitive information are confidentiality, integrity, and availability.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality means limiting access to sensitive data to an appropriate set of individuals or organizations. Access includes reading, writing, viewing, or printing of the data.

The Data Banks store personal data and records covered by the *Privacy Act of 1974*. Information reported to the Data Banks requires protection from loss of confidentiality due to unauthorized disclosure.

The Data Banks keep information confidential by securing the computer systems, encrypting the data, and operating in secure facilities. Data access is further controlled by authentication procedures, requiring a unique combination of Data Bank ID, user ID, and password.

## INTEGRITY

Data integrity means maintaining "precise, accurate, unmodified, and consistent" information, guarding against improper information modification or destruction, and ensuring information authenticity.

NPDB-HIPDB information, electronically or in print, must be maintained exactly as it was submitted

and altered only in accordance with established procedures.

NPDB-HIPDB system integrity is ensured by maintaining off-site backups, archiving paper and electronic records, verifying data inputs, and authenticating users. Effective system design and maintenance, configuration management procedures, and firewall and intrusion detection tools further enhance data integrity.

## AVAILABILITY

Availability means ensuring timely and reliable access and use of information. Information availability is affected by the system's reliability and the timeliness of delivery.

NPDB-HIPDB data must be timely, as the information is used by entities to make decisions, such as whether to give a practitioner a State license or grant a practitioner clinical privileges.

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*The Data Bank Protects Sensitive Information continued on page 5*

# Helpful Hints From

## ATTACH A VOIDED CHECK OR DEPOSIT SLIP TO YOUR EFT APPLICATION

To ensure timely processing of your Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) information, remember to submit a voided check or deposit slip with one copy of your signed *EFT Authorization* form before mailing it to the Data Bank address specified on the form. If you are unable to obtain a voided check or deposit slip, you may attach a letter from your bank (on the bank's letterhead) verifying your account information. This documentation is required to process your EFT application. Be sure to keep another copy of the *EFT Authorization* form for your records.

## ITP AND QRXS USERS TAKE NOTE!

Due to the recent NPDB-HIPDB Web site address change to [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov), all users of the Interface Control Document (ICD) Transfer Program (ITP) and Querying and Reporting XML Service (QRXS) must upgrade their version of the ITP or QRXS client programs. Updated client programs are available on the NPDB-HIPDB Web site located at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/itp.html](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/itp.html) and [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/qrxs.html](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/qrxs.html).

Now that the new Web site address has taken effect, the current versions of the ITP and QRXS client programs will continue to function for a limited period of time. However, all ITP and QRXS users must upgrade their client program to the new version no later than September 18, 2006.



*The Data Bank Protects Sensitive Information continued from page 4*

While the NPDB-HIPDB exists mainly to augment existing forms of credential review, non-availability of NPDB-HIPDB data could result in less-informed decisions.

NPDB-HIPDB availability is guaranteed by contingency plans that accommodate unforeseen disruptions of services. These plans are periodically tested, and paper and electronic documents are all securely archived. Furthermore, in case of a power disruption, the NPDB-HIPDB facility has redundant power, communications, heating, and cooling equipment. The facility also has state-of-the-art secured access and fire protection.

#### CONCLUSION

The NPDB-HIPDB system processes information with significant confidentiality, integrity, and availability requirements. Because the Data Banks have strong security controls in place, they will continue to provide users with the facts they need to make informed decisions and improve the quality of health care in the nation. ¶

## Reporting Pitfalls

The Data Banks would like to remind all registered entities reporting adverse clinical privilege/panel membership actions that they should only report actions that are a result of professional review activity and NOT actions that are automatically or administratively taken. Automatic or administrative actions are frequently dictated by bylaws, policies, or procedures and imposed by staff. For example, a hospital that suspends a practitioner's clinical privileges automatically or administratively because the practitioner's State license was suspended should not report its action.

Hospitals and health plans should be aware of erroneously reporting State licensure actions, when they actually intend to report an action they took based on a State licensure action. However, if the hospital, through a professional review action, suspends the practitioner's privileges for more than 30 days based on the suspended license, then the action is reportable as an adverse action.

For more information on reportable actions, please review the National Practitioner Data Bank—Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB) Interactive Training Program and the NPDB and HIPDB Guidebooks. The training is not only free and informative, but also offers many examples of what is—and is not—reportable to the NPDB and the HIPDB. The training is available on-line from the Data Banks home page picture icon, Interactive Training, located at the bottom right of the Web site at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov). The NPDB and HIPDB Guidebooks are also available from the Data Bank home page. ¶

# The Data Banks

#### FACT SHEET ON SECTION 1921

For more information on Section 1921 of the *Social Security Act*, see the new *Fact Sheet on Section 1921*, located on-line at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov). (On the left side of the menu under the Publications heading, click **Brochures and Fact Sheets**.) The comment period for responding to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for Section 1921 closed on May 22, 2006. Please continue to check *NPDB-HIPDB Data Bank News* for further information on the status of Section 1921.

#### ITP USERS: UPDATE BILLING INFORMATION

After renewing registration with the Data Banks, ITP users should ensure their billing information in their header file is up-to-date. After making the changes to

the billing information, verify that the information is correct before submitting a query for processing.

#### REVISION TO ACTION OR CORRECTION?

A **Revision to Action** is an action that relates to and/or modifies an adverse action previously reported to the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) or the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB). Entities are required to report any revisions to a previously reported action. Examples of Revisions to Action include reinstatement of a license or restoration of clinical privileges or professional society membership. A Revision to Action is linked to the report it modifies by the Data Bank Control Number. A **Correction** is a change to the report resulting from the discovery of an error or omission in an initial report. A Correction replaces the current version of a report. ¶

*Past and Upcoming Data Bank Outreach Activities  
from page 3*

health industry event of the year and educates attendees about integrating specialty health care delivery in the United States.

## SEPTEMBER 2006

### ***FSBPT Annual Meeting and Delegate Assembly***

On September 7th, PDBB will present at the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) annual meeting in Portland, OR. The meeting is entitled *Bridges to the Future of Public Protection*. "The use of the image of 'bridges' for the 2006 annual meeting theme is intended to illustrate the need for licensing boards to stay connected to consumers, legislatures and licensees and to travel to a future of improved regulation and healthcare together."

### ***Policy Forum and Annual NAMSS Conference***

September 17th will find Data Bank representatives in Atlanta, GA for a Data Banks Policy Forum. This forum convenes before the start of the 30th Annual National Association Medical Staff Services (NAMSS) conference on September 18th. The forum attendees will discuss: existing policies that have generated frequent questions, Section 1921, the importance of compliance, and the PDS. Following the Policy Forum, Data Bank representatives will attend the NAMSS conference and answer questions from Data Bank users at the NPDB-HIPDB exhibit booth. The Chief of PDBB will also present on the Data Banks and the PDS at the conference. NAMSS members include individuals responsible for managing credentialing, privileging, practitioner/provider

organizations, and regulatory compliance in the diverse health care industry.

### ***AIM Institute***

The Administrators in Medicine (AIM) 2006 Educational Workshops: *Physician Licensing Profiles and Technology* will be held in conjunction with the AIM Eastern and Southern Regional Meetings in Orlando, FL, September 27th through 29th. PDBB is invited to present on the Data Banks, Section 1921, and the PDS.

### ***NBCOT***

On September 30th, the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy will hold its 12th Annual Conference on Occupational Therapy State Regulation in Crystal City, VA. Meeting topics include "Current and emerging regulatory, certification and policy-related issues affecting occupational therapy practice." A Data Bank representative will talk with the group about the NPDB and HIPDB and recent developments, including the PDS.

## OCTOBER 2006

### ***AADE***

PDBB will present at the 123rd American Association of Dental Examiners (AADE) meeting on October 14th in Las Vegas, NV. The AADE was founded in 1882 and is comprised of State and regional dental boards, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, specialty dental boards, as well as both past and present members of those boards, board administrators, board attorneys, and dental hygiene educators.

### ***ASPPB***

The Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) will hold its 46th Annual Meeting of Delegates in San Diego, CA, October 27th through 29th. ASPPB was formed in 1961 and is an association of Canadian and U.S. licensing boards. A Data Bank representative will provide a presentation on the Data Banks, Section 1921, and the PDS.

### ***AIM***

The Administrators in Medicine Western and Central Regional Meetings will be held in Reno, NV, October 26th through 27th. PDBB has been invited to talk about the Data Banks, Section 1921, and the PDS.

## NOVEMBER 2006

### ***NCQA***

On November 9th, a Data Bank representative will serve as a faculty for the NCQA Introduction to Credentialing Workshop. The Data Bank representative will provide a basic NPDB-HIPDB presentation. The workshop will be held in Washington, DC.

### ***NCSBN***

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) has invited a Data Bank representative to speak at the Nursys® Users Meeting. The Nursys® (Nurse System) is a computer system that contains nurse license and license discipline information that is provided by boards of nursing in the United States and its territories. The exact date of the meeting has not yet been established.¶

## Dear Data Banks...

**T**his column answers questions about Data Bank policy and procedures. **If you have a question, please write to Dear Data Banks at P.O. Box 10832, Chantilly, VA 20153-0832 or e-mail your question to Dear Data Banks at [npdb-hipdb@sra.com](mailto:npdb-hipdb@sra.com).** We look forward to hearing from you!

**Question:** Do I need to submit a new *Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Authorization* form after I renew my registration with the Data Banks?

**Answer:** No. If you currently use EFT as your payment method and you are renewing your registration, you are not required to submit another EFT application (assuming your current EFT information has not changed).

However, if your EFT account information changes, at any time (e.g., routing number, bank account information) you must submit the new information using the *Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Authorization* form available through the Integrated Querying and Reporting Service (IQRS), at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov). Select **Administrator Options** on the *Registration Confirmation* screen. Click **Authorize Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)** on the *Administrator Options* screen. Complete all fields on the form and click **Submit to Data Bank(s)**. Print two copies of the formatted *EFT Authorization* form. Keep one copy for your records and sign, date, and attach a voided check or deposit slip to the other copy and mail it to the address specified on the formatted copy.

You must ensure that your account information is kept current to avoid interruption of querying services with the National Practitioner Data Bank—Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB).

**Question:** Where can I find information regarding rejection codes and other reporting or querying codes?

**Answer:** You can locate rejection and other reporting codes for all NPDB-HIPDB transactions on the Data Bank Web site, located at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov). On the home page, scroll to the left side of your screen to the General Information heading and select **Reporting Codes**. On the *Reporting Codes* Web page, you may select the appropriate code list to assist you in your report preparation.

**Question:** I have some outdated entity address information in the IQRS. What should I do?

**Answer:** To update address information, your entity's administrator should log in to the IQRS and click **Update Registration Profile** on the *Administrator Options* screen. (Please note that only administrator accounts have access to the *Update Entity Profile* screen.) Administrators should complete the Entity Identification fields on the *Update Entity Profile* screen that require a change, complete the Certification fields, and click **Submit To Data Bank(s)**. **Note:** If you modify your entity's name, statutory authority, or query preferences, you will be required to sign and mail an *Entity Update* form. In this case, your changes will not take effect until after the Data Banks receive your *Entity Update* form in the mail, validate the information, and process the update. You will receive confirmation of the update through Data Bank Correspondence. For more information, see the *Fact Sheet on Updating Profile Information Through the IQRS*, available on-line at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov). (On the left side of the menu under the Publications heading, click **Brochures and Fact Sheets**.)

**Question:** How do I know if my adverse action narrative description is legally sufficient and if I meet the statutory reporting requirements?

**Answer:** To meet the statutory reporting requirements, the description must have enough detailed information so that a knowledgeable reviewer can determine clearly the circumstances of the action or surrender. In other words, you must provide a clear understanding of what the subject practitioner is alleged to have done, the nature of the action taken, and the reasons for the report. Merely repeating the adverse action or basis for action code is not sufficient. For additional information on providing a legally sufficient narrative description, see the *Fact Sheet on Developing Legally Sufficient Narratives for Adverse Action Reports*, available on-line at [www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov](http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov). (On the left side of the menu under the Publications heading, click **Brochures and Fact Sheets**.)

**If you have an urgent question, please call the Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-6732. Information Specialists are available to speak with you weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (5:30 p.m. on Fridays) Eastern Time. The Customer Service Center is closed on all Federal holidays. 🇺🇸**

# On the Horizon

## UPCOMING NPDB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The next National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) Executive Committee meeting will take place on November 28, 2006, in Arlington, VA.

Look for a summary of the meeting and any resulting actions in future issues of *NPDB-HIPDB Data Bank News*.

## COMING IN SPRING 2007: PDS PROTOTYPE

In Spring 2007, the National Practitioner Data Bank and the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank will roll out the Proactive Disclosure Service (PDS) prototype. Enrollment in the prototype service is limited to those who participated in the initial development seminars. It is anticipated that the PDS prototype will be tested for a period of one to two years. When the prototype period ends, all registered entities will be invited to enroll their practitioners in the operational PDS.

The PDS notifies entities of new reports and report changes filed with the Data Banks on all of their PDS-registered practitioners within one business day of the Data Banks' receipt of new reports. No query is required. This service ensures continuous monitoring of practitioners.†

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES

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